



**Board of Livestock Meeting Minutes
July 21 and 22, 2008
Monday 1:00 p.m. - Tuesday 8:00 a.m.
Helena MT 59601**

Monday, July 21, 2008

Draft

Board of Livestock Members Present:

Stan Boone, representing cattle producers
Jan French, Vice Chair, representing pork producers
Bill Hedstrom, Chairman, representing dairy and egg producers
Becky Weed, representing sheep producers

Absent:

George Hammond
Linda Nielsen
Meg Smith

Staff:

Marty Clark, assistant administrator, Brands Enforcement Division
John Q. Grainger, administrator, Brands Enforcement Division
George Harris, administrator, Centralized Services Division
Christian Mackay, executive officer
Steve Merritt, public information officer
Carol Olmstead, chief, Meat Inspection Bureau
Dr. Jeanne Rankin, assistant state veterinarian, Animal Health Division
Sherry Rust, administrative assistant, recorder
Dan Turcotte, chief, Milk and Egg Bureau
Dr. Marty Zaluski, state veterinarian/Animal Health administrator

Guests:

Les Graham, Montana Auction Livestock Association of Markets, Montana Farm Bureau
Carole Boone, Ingmar
Jeanne Souvigney
Rachel Kinkie, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Ariel Overstreet, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Raemarie Gordon, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Tom O Milesnich
Sharon McDonald
Kim Baker, Montana Cattlemen's Association
Paul Ringling, Montana Cattlemen's Association
Seth Broesder, Representative Rehberg's Office
Jim Wisman
John Steuber, USDA APHIS Wildlife Services
Kristi Pettis, Northern Broadcasting Network
Aeric Reilly, Montana Woolgrowers Association
Glenn Hockett
Barry Rice
Diane Rice
Amy McNamara, Greater Yellowstone
Tim Stevens

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Stan Frasier
Ben Lamb
Jim Bailey, Gallatin Wildlife Association
Senator Don Steinbeisser, SD 19
Nicole Griffin, Montana Farm Bureau
Jennifer Madgic, Senator Tester's Office
Alex Russell
John Honstead, USDA APHIS
Jerry Diemer, USDA APHIS Veterinary Service
Errol Rice, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Jay Bodner, Montana Stockgrowers Association

Call to Order and Board Communications:

Chairman Bill Hedstrom called the meeting to order at 1: p.m.

- Becky Weed said weather is good. Hot but still some green grass out there.
- Jan French said the Hobson area could use another rain. They have had three weeks of nice rain, lots of grass, grain crop is ripening slowly. Just had a huge hail storm with lots of damage.
- Stan Boone said hay is the best he has ever seen in the Ingomar area. Hay on areas where he has never seen hay before, green grass hay. Cattle market is holding extremely well.
- Bill Hedstrom expressed his concern on feed prices, corn prices are very high.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the July 21 and 22, 2008 meeting were accepted as presented.

Approval of Executive Officer Reports:

Jan French moved to approve the executive officer report as presented. Stan Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Chairman Interim Authorizations and Activities:

Chairman interim actions requiring board approval:

- Out of state travel for George Edwards to travel to Washington D.C. to speak to Congressional Delegates on behalf of the Livestock Loss Reduction and Mitigation Board

Jan French Moved to approve chairman authorization to send George Edwards to Washington D.C. Becky Weed seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUISNESS

TRANSFER OF CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE, Marty Falstad

Explained the issue:

- Sidney Livestock Market Center is closing and selling to Yellowstone Livestock Company and requests transfer of Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to the new owner.
- Board of Livestock will hold a public hearing regarding the request on August 4, 2008, at 1:00 PM at the Moose Lodge in Sidney.
- Proper notices were posted; mailings and public media announcements are complete.

Reports

WILDLIFE SERVICES (PREDATOR CONTROL), John Steuber

Reported:

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- on Friday Judge Molloy granted the request for an injunction on wolf delisting and they are back under the endangered species act,
- there is no change in Wildlife Services activities because their grey wolf management protocol is the same as prior to the removal from the endangered species list,
- the ruling does affect land owners as once again on the northern side they cannot kill or harass a wolf for any reason,
- it ends hunting season – no hunting in Idaho, Wyoming, or Montana.

Wolf Population Growth in Montana:

- Dec 04 the count was 153 wolves;
- Dec 05 count of 256 (67%),
- Dec 06 the count was 360 (24%),
- Dec 07 total count was 422 (34%),
- Average increase per year about 42%.
- Idaho is estimated to have over 1,000 wolves.
- Total tri-state area estimated home to over 2,000.

Predation in 2008 is up:

- cow/calves are about the same at 75-78 but number of adult cows killed this year is up about 100%,
- sheep kills are way up - 30 last year compared to 99 this year,
- other kills reported are a guard dog, a herd dog, llama, and lots of goats.

Wildlife Services annual meeting:

- August 26 near Red Lodge,
- Christian Mackay is attending.

OVERVIEW ANIMAL ID WORKSHOP

Sherry Rust gave a brief Power Point pictorial presentation of the workshop and the field trip into Louisiana marsh cattle country.

Recess:

Chairman Hedstrom called a recess at 1:45 PM.

Reconvene:

The meeting was reconvened at 2:00 PM.

GUEST SPEAKER

SUSANNE LEWIS, Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park, cited bison and brucellosis management as the most difficult issues facing Yellowstone National Park and its neighbors. She gave a brief history of the park and the establishment of the park as a wildlife reservoir. Brucellosis, detected in bison and elk in 1917, does not belong on the landscape. The issue is not about livestock vs. wildlife; address the disease not the animals. Bison are not going to be allowed to repopulate the Great Plains nor are we going to depopulate the Greater Yellowstone Area elk and bison to eliminate brucellosis. The bison population is not endangered, nor is Yellowstone National Park overgrazed. Bison migrate in winter because food is easier to get at lower level.

The Interagency Bison Management Plan is at a turning point and it is time act. The partnering agencies need to develop a transparent decision making process whose success can be easily measured and judged by the public. The National Park Service is working with the state of Montana on a 30 year lease on Royal Teton Ranch as provided for in the Interagency Bison Management Plan, will continue to foster research of brucellosis wildlife vaccines, and is finalizing the Environmental Impact Statement addressing long term comprehensive bison wildlife vaccines as part of the goals. The Interagency Bison Management Plan requires the conservation of bison and addresses the risk of disease transmission. The partnership must unite to find resources to develop effective and sustainable vaccines for both wildlife and livestock, implement strong adaptive management changes,

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find places outside the park where bison are welcome and present no threat to livestock, review, revise, and strengthen regulatory framework surrounding livestock and wildlife disease management

POINTS MADE DURING THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

- The 3,000 bison number in the record of decision is a brucellosis risk number, not a population number.
- National Park Service does not intend to manage to that 3,000 number,
- Management strategies are revised according to above or below the 3,000 number.
- NPS hopes to have the EIS out end of 2008 regarding bison vaccination within the park.
- After the draft, take comments and input with a final document in 2009.
- Yellowstone National Park is not ignoring the disease.
- NPS sent 1400 bison to slaughter, vaccinated, and spent over 1 million dollars on implementing the IBMP.
- The majority of bison outside the park for the past two years came from the central herd, not north.
- Bison movement for the central herd has been so for the last four or five years depending on weather.
- Grass is very good, green, fine grasses are growing, bison will have grass going into winter.
- Science does not say the park is overgrazed.
- Bison move out of the park in search of quick and easy food.
- For a very short time of the year and will return to the park.
- There are currently approximately 2500 head plus calves left in Hayden and Lamar Valleys.

Reports Continued

MEAT INSPECTION, Carol Olmstead

Reported:

- Meat Inspection is fully staffed and busy with fair kill.
- Interstate Shipment – couple of plants interested and are waiting to see rule process.
- Title 5 interstate shipment program:
 - need a couple of state directors on the committee,
 - approximately 18 months to do the rule making process,
 - maybe three plants in Montana interested but concerned about oversight,
 - heavy oversight might as well be federal,
- FSIS is doing a food defense plan:
 - not mandatory,
 - do not see a need for it in rural Montana,
 - working up a generic plan for plants to modify to fit their plant
- No comments were received on the rule making,
 - notice of adoption was filed on July 21,
 - will be published on July 31 and effective on August 1.

MILK & EGG BUREAU, Dan Turcotte

Updates

- Core Mark Distributing requested a meeting with the Board of Livestock.
 - set up for June in Missoula,
 - Dan Turcotte, Bill Hedstrom, Christian Mackay, Clyde Peterson, Mark Huelskamp, Core Mark President of Spokane Division, and Inland Dairy representatives in attendance,
 - requested posting a placard to post in stores selling with dual dates to explain the two dates rather than denying use of dual dates.

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Dan requested direction from the board. Does the board want to accept the compromise solution?

- It would still be confusing to the Montana public,
- could not find reference where the board authorized the exemption, or the later exemption,
- surmise exemption was done internally with no board authorization,
- either keep the single sell by date or make legal changes to allow dual dates,
- Montana sells milk in several states and they use the sell by dates for that state.
- Inland Dairy and Core Mark are in direct violation of Montana rules and subject to \$600/day fine if not in compliance.

Jan French moved that the Board of Livestock reject the proposed modification of the sell by date and enforce the code as written. Stan Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Dan was charged with enforcing the rule and the \$600 per day fine as per the law.

Dan suggested the changes in administrative rules:

- Add "single code date" because of a letter received from Safeway today which claims there is no reference to a single code date.
- Grade B milk chapter-ARM Chapter 32.9:
 - badly in need of updating,
 - 28 years since any changes made-many rules no longer apply,
 - adopt USDA rules concerning manufacturing non-fluid milk,
 - can adopt by reference per Carol Olmstead – then update our codes as USDA does

The board charged Dan to review the rules and make suggestions of needed changes.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER REPORT, Steve Merritt

- provided copies of letters received for the board via email.

PRODUCER ORGANIZATION UPDATES

MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION, Sharon McDonald, reviewed recent activities:

- The Kidney for Katlyn fund raising drive raised \$50,000,
- Mid-year meeting recently held at the Hugh Broadus ranch agenda included:
 - Certified Beef Program,
 - program to link producers with consumers who want to buy beef,
 - bus tour of Colstrip mining.
- Young Cattlemen meeting will be held in Bozeman in September.
- On line brand books are very popular.
- The Beef on Every Plate program:
 - solicits donation of canner cows,
 - donation of funds for processing from non-producers,
 - beef is ground into burger and distributed to food banks in Montana,
 - over 13,000 pounds were donated this year.

MONTANA WOOLGROWERS ASSOCIATION, Aeric Riley

- Is working with Dr. Zaluski and Dr. Rankin on a possible bluetongue outbreak this year:
 - California woolgrowers have a vaccine they sell for bluetongue but it is not available this year,
 - the ear tag used on cattle is not recommended for sheep,
 - a pour on approved for sheep is not very effective –more effective if sprayed on belly – but not recommended.
- Ram sale is September 11 in Miles City with approximately 280 sheep expected.
- Big Horn Sheep are still an issue – will be harder and harder to keep sheep on public grazing lands.

MONTANA STOCKGROWERS ASSOCIATION, Jay Bodner

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- Representatives attended the wolf delisting hearing in Missoula,
 - they are still dealing with what producers can and cannot do as pertains to the injunction.
- Mid-Year meeting in Havre was a successful BQA event
- Sponsored an Undaunted Stewardship program-diverse attendees-issues facing producers.
- Participated in CAFO working group-information sharing-educating producers and agencies.

MONTANA LIVESTOCK AUCTION MARKET ASSOCIATION/MONTANA FARM BUREAU, Les Graham, reported on the recent auction market meeting:

- Big market concern is that now in Montana cow buyers are knocking \$3 to \$13 head off for testing.

Montana Farm Bureau

- Recent mid year meeting in Great Falls,
- retreat for retraining staff
- Montana Farm Bureau won five national awards –been very active.

OPEN MICROPHONE

SENATOR REHBERG'S OFFICE, Seth Broesder

- session is wrapping up before the August recess,
- energy is the big issue- costs, ideas on how to impact prices,
- Representative Reed indicated they are not going to pass any appropriations this year – waiting for new president,
- Seth is leaving the congressman's office in two weeks to pursue other interests within Montana.

Seth asked for a progress report on the GYIBC MOU. Bill Hedstrom read a letter from Governor Schweitzer to Secretary Johannes sent in 2006:

- Requested a unified approach to the three states from Interior and USDA,
- understanding is that the other two states were very close to signing in 2006,
- Governor Schweitzer signed the MOU in 2006 and Wyoming indicated it would sign,
- following the signatures of Secretary Johannes and Kemp thorn.

July 18, 2008 follow up letter:

- Forest Service reallocation of elk feeding grounds,
- Governor Schweitzer twice signed the Interagency Bison Management MOU in 2006 and last month,
- Wyoming stands willing to sign but Idaho is not.

JIM WISMAN, GALLATIN WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION

- Had questions about the brucellosis plan to be presented by Montana Farm Bureau and Montana Stockgrowers Association.
- Bill Hedstrom replied that the board has not yet seen any proposal but the subject could possibly be brought up tomorrow.

JIM BAILEY, BELGRADE, retired wildlife biologist, GWA

- commented on the Farm Bureau and Stockgrowers Association plan as he got it off the internet,
- proposal to eliminate brucellosis in wildlife, not possible,
- brucella must be managed in livestock,
- funding should be designated to managing livestock i.e. vaccine
- should not use wildlife funds to manage the disease
- brucellosis is not a problem in wildlife
- not a serious proposal without an outline of costs

REPRESENTATIVE DIANE RICE, HD 71, speaking as a rancher and citizen of Madison County

- comment to Wildlife Services referenced HB343 she sponsored last session,

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- appropriation to help the state of Montana have legal standing to move forward in delisting should what happened happen,
- regarding any proposal to pass split state status, did not see it anywhere on the agenda.

Chairman Hedstrom offered clarification regarding the questions on split state status saying that Item # 5 on the agenda is an update on the brucellosis investigation.

Becky Weed stated while split state may be discussed with various board members not in attendance there will not be action taken on this issue at this meeting.

STAN FRAZIER, HELENA

- the solution to bison management is to keep cattle away from bison,
- vaccinate the cattle,
- public looses all the way around on public grazing.

GLENN HOCKETT, GALLATIN WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION

- disagreed with the evidence pointing to elk,
- incomplete epidemiology investigation,
- no credibility in the report,
- requests a more full disclosure,
- does not understand the investigative system.

MIKE VOLESKY, GOVERNOR SCHWEITZER'S OFFICE, answered Representative Rice's concern regarding her legislation last session.

- requested Montana to join Wyoming in a lawsuit against the federal government,
- after looking into it the governor's office found it was not filed yet and there was no need for Montana to join in the lawsuit (would still retain standing).

DON WOERNER, VETERINARIAN FROM LAUREL

- There needs to be renamed should be Interagency brucellosis management plan,
- dealing with a biological agent, disease organism,
- where does the problem come from, the disease or the way the disease is handled,
- who is infecting who?
- National elk refuge herd of about 1000 fenced bison,
 - tested free at one time,
 - got loose in Grand Teton,
 - now have a high sero-positive,
 - the bison got it from elk, not the other way around.

Adjournment

Chairman Hedstrom adjourned the meeting at 4:15 p.m.

Tuesday, July 22, 2008

Board of Livestock Present:

Stan Boone, representing cattle producers
Jan French, Vice Chair, representing pork producers
Bill Hedstrom, Chairman, representing dairy and egg producers
Becky Weed, representing sheep producers

Absent:

George Hammond
Linda Nielsen
Meg Smith

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Staff:

Marty Clark, assistant administrator, Brands Enforcement Division
George Edwards, administrator, Livestock Loss Reduction & Mitigation Board
John Q. Grainger, administrator, Brands Enforcement Division
George Harris, administrator, Centralized Services Division
Dr Bill Layton, administrator Diagnostic Laboratory
Christian Mackay, executive officer
Steve Merritt, public information officer
Monte Nick, chief, Milk Control Bureau
Carol Olmstead, chief, Meat Inspection Bureau
Dr. Jeanne Rankin, assistant state veterinarian, Animal Health Division
Sherry Rust, administrative assistant, recorder
John Steuber, APHIS WS
Dan Turcotte, chief, Milk and Egg Bureau
Dr. Marty Zaluski, state veterinarian/Animal Health administrator

Guests:

Carole Boone
Ben Lamb
Steve Kelly
Sharon McDonald
Paul Ringling
Rod Hudson
John Baucus
Jay Bodner, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Ariel Overstreet, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Rae Marie Gordon, Montana Stockgrowers Association
Tom O Milesnick
Les Graham, Montana Farm Bureau, Montana Auction Market Association
Nicole Griffin, Montana Farm Bureau
Ed Waldner, Montana Milk Producers Association
Ruben A Wurz, Quota Committee
Don Woerner, DVM
Jim Wisman
John Honstead, USDA
Kristi Pettis, Northern Ag Network
Justin Paulson, producer
Tom Linfield

Chairman Bill Hedstrom called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

DIVISION REPORTS

CENTRALIZED SERVICES, George Harris
Milk Control Bureau

- 120,000 now in their budget,
- 240,000 is the annual budget,
- can suspend the fees if the funding is adequate without levying that fee or leave fee as is.

Milk and Egg Inspection Assessment (includes Milk Laboratory)

- supported by \$.15 per hundred weight,
- budget is \$440,000 –the income will barely meet the budget,

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- the \$1050 fee cap on some of the larger producers allows several dairies to merge to pay one fee then the department loses funding,
- \$.15 may be a little short of total budget needs next year- might look at a .05 cent increase,
- look for funding from EPP for general funds (40% of milk tested is from out of state producers so general fund should pay for it).

Milk Control Bureau Updates, Monte Nick reported:

- production for 2008 is up over 8 million pounds,
- losing producers but gaining production,
- imported milk was 47 million pounds this calendar year,
- milk imports went down from 5 million to 2 million due to the closure of the Kalispell plant,
- was recently served with subpoena requesting paperwork regarding minimum price violation,
- the Milk Control Bureau hired a contract attorney (Milk Control Board lacks authority to hire staff).
- Milk Quota Committee information:
 - made up of meadow gold and country classic producers,
 - independent of Milk Control Board or Bureau,
 - oversees transfer of quota,
 - funding for quota committee comes from special fund assessed to producers,
 - once the balance reaches \$5,000 the fee is suspended until needed,
 - pays for committee travel etc.

LIVESTOCK LOSS REDUCTION AND MITIGATION BOARD, GEORGE EDWARDS

Travel and outreach reported

- Billings –met with district livestock inspectors to educate them on their roles in investigation,
- Great Yellowstone Commission – seeking support,
- Billings – Montana Woolgrowers summer meeting,
- Havre – Montana Stockgrowers summer meeting,
- Washington D.C. – testified Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
 - every Senator in attendance testified support of this bill,
 - Tester introduces Grey Wolf reimbursement, Baucus is on board,
 - has now passed through committee.
- State Fair in Great Falls next week,
- working with Montana Interactive to set up credit care, echeck or check,
- looking into specialized license plate (cost @ \$22,000).

OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL

George Harris reviewed the questions from last board meeting regarding division travel for necessary out of state travel

- added US Cattlemen and American Pork Producer meetings to executive officer's budget,
- Christian Mackay justified the need to attend National Cattlemen Beef Association,
- questioned does executive officer need to attend both Western States Law Enforcement Association and International Livestock Investigator Association,
 - ILIA is much broader looking at more than brand issues,
 - move the WILIA down to brands enforcement so another brand person can attend,

Carol Olmstead pointed out that:

- not all travel is funded from the general fund,
- Meat Inspection and Animal Health utilize grant funds for appropriate travel.

Stan Boone moved to approve the out of state travel meeting schedule with the suggested corrections. Jan French seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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2008 FISCAL YEAR END BUDGET FINALIZATION

George Harris reviewed the current budget status which includes additional expenses:

- \$149,500.00 in retirement payouts (a total of 14 long term employees who retired this year),
- \$75,000 to 100,000 more in lab supplies than budgeted due to inflation,
- \$45,000 to 50,000 more in Brands for fuel costs.

PER CAPITA FEE

George Harris supplied a chart showing head counts and Department of Revenue receipts.

- horses dropped \$5,000 (possibly severely under reported),
- cattle head count went up by 25,000,
- revenue will be close to last year,
- in September the board will set the per capita fee,
- keep in mind the 3% pay increase due next year,
- consider the decrease in interest income.

Recess:

Chairman Hedstrom called a recess at 9:25 AM.

Reconvene:

The meeting was reconvened at 9:41 AM.

BRANDS ENFORCEMENT, John Grainger

BRAND CONFLICT COMMITTEE

The committee met on June 25th with two individuals bringing requests:

- one applicant could not be helped as the brand had been transferred,
 - father had transferred the brand to someone before he died,
 - letter of explanation sent to requestor,
 - may still come before the board for resolution.
- second had been to the committee two years ago ,
 - was given the option to bring four releases of conflicts.

PROPOSED FEE INCREASES

John Grainger said there is not enough information to recommend increase in inspection fees at this time,

- will continue to research and keep the board informed,
- recommended elimination of seasonal brands (10-12 per year),

Fee increases recommended (before January 1, 2009),

- Re-record \$150 in 2011 (up from \$100 in 2001) ,
- Record new brand \$250 with \$100 non-refundable (because of the man hours involved in researching),
- Ornamental \$100, no change,
- Duplicate brand certificate \$10,
- Grazing permits
 - 1-19 \$10,
 - 20-100 \$15,
 - 101-199 \$20,
 - 200-299 \$30,
 - 300-399 \$40,
 - 400-499 \$50,
 - 500 + \$75.

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Mr. Grainger suggested the board solicit comments from producers and then take action on this item at the next board meeting.

SHEEP PERMITS

- are online as of yesterday,
- go to liv.mt.gov,
- future sites will be available at market.mt.gov and sheep.mt.gov.

DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY, Dr. Bill Layton
AAVLD

Dr. Layton submitted response to the accreditation inspection in June.

- committee met last week, has not heard anything yet,
- need to address aging facility issue.

BRUCELLOSIS TESTING

3,108 tests were completed in 2007,

- 60% of lab time spend on brucella testing,
- 3 state employees,
- \$2.58 cost per test less \$.45 from the federal grant,
- \$2.14 cost with current fee of \$1.50,

Dr. Layton requested direction from the board:

- producers having the test asked to pay more,
- increase fee,
- pay out of per capita.

Dr. Rankin pointed out anything going out of state must be tested at the market at a cost of \$7.50 each. The board will hold on this information and expedite an increase when and if needed.

LIMS

- format and forms are still issues,
- IT continues to work to get the forms as requested,
- are testing with double entry to assure date is being caught,
- four lab sections are ready to go with three left with small issues to be completed,
- asked for permission to change the header to read *Montana Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, State of Montana Department of Livestock*, address for continuity in billing procedures.

The board agreed to allow the header change as suggested.

NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH LABORATORY NETWORK

Under the recently renewed Classic Swine Fever agreement NAHLN

- is purchasing a \$50,000 high throughput PCR real time unit,
- in return for 12 Classic Swine Fever tests,
- the new unit processes 96 throughputs at a time vs. 13 on the old PCR unit.

Recess:

The chairman called a recess at 10:38 AM.

Reconvene:

The meeting reconvened at 10:45 AM.

ANIMAL HEALTH REPORT, Dr. Marty Zaluski

QUARANTINE FACILITY

Ken McDonald, Wildlife Division Administrator, FWP, explained the purpose and activities of the bison quarantine feasibility study.

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- Identified in the Inner Agency Bison Management Plan as a tool to help address the issue of bison coming out of Yellowstone National Park,
- take bison calves to test and cull for sero-prevalence,
- keep the calves in quarantine and continue to test for negativity,
- bring in 100 calves, cull about half at nine months for testing,
- raise the remainder to breed and test those calves,
- 2005/06 started with 100 calves – culled four that tested positive,
- of the 96 48 were culled for testing at 9 months,
- the remaining 48, eight males and 40 females were used for breeding,
- now have 23 cows with 15 calves and 8 bulls in the facility,
- need to move those cows and calves and half of the bulls out of the facility per EIS,
- these bison remain public animals (wildlife).
- Will send out a request for proposals from organizations, agencies and tribes to hold these animals.
 - Potential applicants must provide a long range plan for the future of the bison,
 - held free of contact with other livestock or bison,
 - first year confined for regular testing,
 - second through fourth looser confinement.
- The plan calls for a second 100 calves to be worked through the system,
 - 100 calves were brought into the facility,
 - two years from now they will be bred,
 - then disbursed as the first herd was.

By the time the 2005/06 calves complete the program it will have been eight to ten years. If they get through the first calving with no sero-positive it looks good. None of the bred animals converted to positive during birthing.

ELK SURVEILLANCE

Neal Anderson, FWP, reviewed a handout with five surveillance priorities:

1.
 - Determine the extent of brucellosis as it radiates out from Yellowstone National Park,
 - defined areas are centered around the park (south western and south central Montana)
 - holders of 2900 A9 and B12 licenses and 440 legal bull/antlerless elk permits will be mailed blood test kits and instructions,
 - area landowners will have an additional 2,000 kits that can be doled out to general license hunters hunting on their land,
 - training on proper use of testing kits offered to landowners and hunters,
 - need usable test results – training may improve result totals,
 - might use a raffle system as an incentive to hunters returning kits,
 - approximate cost for this priority \$57,572.
2.
 - Enhanced surveillance in Paradise and Madison Valley,
 - increase samples focused on high risk areas,
 - testing costs estimated at a little over \$11,000.
3.
 - Enhanced surveillance in the Emigrant area near where the first brucellosis was found,
 - additional hunter kits for increased samples,
 - capture elk based on needs for samples (up to 353 at a cost of \$247,000),
 - GPS collars on 35 elk to determine demographics and movements \$32,000.

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4.

- Enhanced surveillance for Paradise Valley and eastern Madison Valley,
- capture and test up to 1,445 animals,
- approximately \$1,011,500 for capture and \$14,000 for testing.

5.

- Tissue collection in conjunction with other surveillance activities.

In the endemic area need to:

- monitor sero-prevalence (what percent),
- beyond that area on a fact finding mission to find any positives and determine sero-prevalence
- find a line where there are sero-prevalent elk and where there are no sero-prevalent elk,
- surveys conducted since 1980 have not found any positives outside of the Greater Yellowstone Area.

BRUCELLOSIS INVESTIGATION UPDATE

Dr Zaluski reviewed the investigation to date.

- Single Pray bovine still remains the only positive found,
- nearly 1100 cattle in Montana have been tested (all negative except the primary one),
- tested six fence line contact herds,
- four source herds have been tested,
- some low risk cattle from one source herd to be tested this fall when they come off grass,
- eight of trace outs left to test –groups of cattle that left the herd,

Trying to find the where the infection came from:

- either infected imported animal or contact with an infected animal, or
- infected wildlife (there are infected elk in the area),
- exposure took place in 2007.

Epidemiological evidence points toward elk with most of the cattle trace outs coming out negative.

- National Veterinarian Service Lab, Ames Iowa, completed a hoof print analysis (genotyping test),
- Dr. Brent Harris concluded that the genetic makeup is close to the strains in wildlife in that area,
- used samples of elk and bison from that area , as well as the 2007 and 2008 cattle samples,
- additional markers and samples provided clearer results this year.

Current state status:

- expect downgrade in the next several weeks,
- nine states are requiring additional testing ,
- developed a standing operating procedure and protocol for any positive tests,
- costs are borne by producers except the testing of contact herds which are covered by APHIS and DOL,
- engaged in a pilot test using 840 tags (RFID) in the investigation,
- requested 25,000 tags which will be free to producers who participate in the plan and enter the Montana I.D. program.

The board discussed the challenges, issues, and concerns regarding the latest brucellosis incident. Dr. Zaluski presented options and suggestions for the board to consider.

Jan French moved to direct the Department of Livestock staff pursue all opportunities to prevent the loss of Montana's Brucellosis Free status or to regain it in the event we do lose it, including but not limited to herd management plans, hot zone management, split state status, high risk management status, tri-state management plans, and possible federal changes. Stan Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS PRIOR TO THE VOTE ON JAN FRENCH'S MOTION

JIM WISMAN, GALLATIN WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION, BOZEMAN:

- downgrade brucella and get with APHIS to change federal rules,
- tri-state meetings are a good idea,
- the rules are worse than the disease,
- split state/hot spot do whatever must be done-other producers should not suffer,
- until Wyoming does something about their feed grounds we are wasting our time,
- suspects the test results as coming from elk.

JOHN HOLDEN, RANCHER NORTH OF VALIER:

- every herd is being continually monitored through cull cows going through the market.

KIM BAKER, VICE PRESIDENT, MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

- potential statewide loss of 6 to 12 million dollars a year with the loss of Class Free Brucellosis status, MCA proposal of split state status was tabled by the board last year,
- efforts need to be in the risk area, 95% of producers should not be penalized for the GYA area, producers in this area will be required to test regardless
- funding may be available for testing in GYA if split state status is implemented.

STEVE KELLEY, CHOTEAU COUNTY PRODUCER:

- advocates split state status for the reasons presented by MCA,
- get it handled as quickly as possible – split state status or whatever.

ROD HUDSON, DISTRICT 2 ADMINISTRATOR MONTANA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION:

- regardless of what it is called split state status is recognized by APHIS,
- other states have already split the state with their rules,
- why should all producers in Montana have to lose their Class Free status,
- must regain status for the majority of cattle producers in Montana.

DON WOERNER, VETERINARIAN FROM LAUREL:

- need to solve the immediate problem through geographic recognition of the disease area,
- regulatory programs may be based on incorrect premise,
- look at hoof and mouth disease in England – over 50 producers committed suicide,
- highly contagious but does not infect humans and causes very little death

ERROL RICE, MONTANA STOCKGROWERS ASSOCIATION:

- supports Jan's motion as right on,
- allowing the state vet to come back to the board with recommendations is right on.

Becky Weed moved that since there is compelling evidence that brucellosis can be transmitted to cattle from wildlife the Board of Livestock direct the Department of Livestock personnel to work with Fish, Wildlife and Parks to jointly set up a task force that includes both livestock producers and sportsmen to help design short-term and long-term wildlife disease management policies. Stan Boone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

DEPARTMENT LOGO, Dr Zaluski

- presented a proposed logo as approved by department administrators and staff,
- requested input from the board,
- the board agreed on the latest logo as presented.

TRICHOMONIASIS PROGRAM, Dr. Rankin:

- New requirement that all veterinarians testing for trich be certified by the department,
- conducted five Trichomoniasis training certification programs in May and June,
- 192 large animal veterinarians now trich certified ,
- approximately 4,000 trich tests taken this year with 21 positive bull's

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- Dr. Zaluski will be conducting six listening sessions this fall with trich comments requested at that time.

INTERAGENCY BISON MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Five to six more meetings before the end of the year to address issues,
- publicly noticed on the state calendar,
- meetings will be moderated,
- costs shared among the agencies.

U.S. ANIMAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Dr. Zaluski explained that USAHA body of government officials and agency professionals that provides a steering committee for APHIS as they make policy.

- Meets once a year,
- this year in Greensboro, North Carolina
- brucellosis committee is chaired this year by Glen Plumb, National Park Service,
- formed a Greater Yellowstone Area subcommittee and asked Dr. Zaluski to chair.

OPEN MICROPHONE

Les Graham

- agrees that the State Vet needs help, suggested let organizations know for them to get behind him.

John Baucus, Helena

- supports Jan's motion about the multi faceted approach how to deal with brucellosis,
- unfortunate split state status issue became so divisive between industry members,
- focus needs to be on getting producers to be able market their cattle in a normal fashion,
- whatever it takes to get the confidence of other states so we can ship cattle back,
- look at all the tools available , support those producers any way we can,
- even living away from Yellowstone Park, if it takes testing my herd to help folks in that area -all for it.

Jan French announced the Pork Producers BBQ competition on July 31 and Aug 1st in Stevensville. 749 loins will be professionally served. She invited all to attend.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

BILL HEDSTROM, CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF LIVESTOCK